MFR04017513

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of FBI Special Agent [redacted]

Type of event: Interview

Dates: January 6, 2004

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Michael Jacobson

Team Number: 1A

Location: FBI, Phoenix Field Office

9/11 Closed by Statute

Participants – Non-Commission: Assistant General Counsel Randy Blair

Participants – Commission: Raj De, Michael Jacobson

[redacted] was the case agent for [redacted] and for Rayed Abdullah. She took over the Abdullah case six months into the investigation. He was connected to Hani Hanjour. He took flight lessons with Hanjour and lived with him as well. At one point, Abdullah was living with Abdullah and with Bandar Al-Hazmi. For Abdullah was a big religious scholar, and was probably the most knowledgeable person at the mosque other than the imam. She thinks that his role was to keep the hijackers "on track." This is just speculation and no witnesses have said this to the FBI. Abdullah originally admitted to the FBI that he knew Hanjour and Bandar Al-Hazmi, but denied knowing Nawaf al-Hazmi. [redacted] well. Given his young age, it was notable how much respect Abdullah was given at the mosque. He was given the respect accorded to an elder, which was really unheard of. There was a whole group of Saudis in Phoenix who were highly influenced by Abdullah. This group associates frequently at the ICC and meets one time a week outside of the mosque as well. She does not have a great sense for how involved Hanjour and Hazmi were in these meetings, during the time they were living in Phoenix. Al-Sharby and al-Shalawi attended these meetings. For a while, [redacted] solely for the purpose of hosting these meetings. When both [redacted] and Abdullah were in the U.S., these meetings occurred frequently. Since they have left it's not happening as much. There is no one bringing them together. [redacted] said that either Hanjour or Nawaf or Bandar had ties to Abdullah back in Saudi Arabia (that is, knew him prior to their association in the U.S.).

[redacted] is not sure whether Bandar and Nawaf al-Hazmi are related.

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She doesn't recall whether or not Abdullah had contacts with individuals in LA or San Diego. She does not know whether Abdullah was in contact with Aulaqi.

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He also has a brother in Michigan, named The interviewed Abdullah, and she has seen the write up of the interview. The interview was not very good. They didn't ask all of the questions she would have asked, and she described the interview as "vague." If Abdullah was back here in the US, they would interview him and ask him about all of his calls. They would also ask him why he said he didn't know Nawaf. The Southern District of NY wouldn't prosecute Abdullah for false statements. We should ask Ken Williams about this situation.

She is not familiar with the reporting from the on the 36 year old Yemeni pilot.

Abdullah is connected to al-Qa'ida based on his associations with other individuals affiliated with al-Qa'ida, including al-Shalawi and al-Sharby. Abdullah is also close to His landlord was

was asked about trip to LA. She noted that this occurred after Abdullah left the U.S. She also noted that the

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Abdullah said that his family was paying for his flight training. She doesn't know whether to believe him on this. We should ask Ken Williams about this. Abdullah worked at a computer place in Phoenix. But he did not make enough in this job to pay for his family and school. She's not sure what the purpose of Abdullah's flight training was. Abdullah said that he wanted to be a commercial pilot. Then 6-7 months after 9/11, he stops taking flight lessons and switches to computers. She is not sure whether Abdullah was asked why Faisal al-Salmi wanted his flight training to be a secret.

[redacted] is not familiar with the name Mohammed al-Qahtani.

[redacted] does not know whether the Shqeirat, the imam at the ICC is radical or not. There have been times that he appears to be.

As far as when Abdullah or Hanjour were radicalized, she doesn't know. They didn't have the resources on them pre 9/11, although she is not sure whether Abdullah came on the FBI's radar screen pre 9/11.

She's now working [redacted] There's no indication that any of the [redacted] [redacted] were in contact with the hijackers.

She began working the [redacted] investigation soon after 9/11. He was associated with Faisal al-Salmi. The FBI searched al-Salmi's belongings and found [redacted] information. [redacted] appeared to be a social leader in the community (as opposed to Abdullah, who was more of a religious leader). [redacted]

[redacted] in Phoenix. Maybe this was why everyone viewed him as a social leader/director. It might have been in this capacity that he traveled to LA.

[redacted] is a Saudi and was born in October 1981. He started at a different school, and then transferred to ASU, where he studied electrical engineering. He is now back in Saudi Arabia working for ARAMCO. ARAMCO paid for his studies in the U.S.

He never ended up going to Chechnya. His idol is Ibn Khattab, and he made comments that he wanted to go fight in Chechnya but he never actually went.

She thinks that the person on the Amtrak train on September 3, 2001 who made suspicious comments and was connected to [redacted] has been identified. She doesn't think that anything significant came of it, but [redacted] would know more.

[redacted]

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[redacted] was aware that he was being surveilled. At one point, he backed up on the road and intentionally hit a surveillance car that was following him. The investigation is still open, but is now assigned to a different agent. The last time they interviewed him was at the airport when he was about to depart.

The FBI's success will come through sources not through technical intercepts. The difficult though in tasking sources to find out about the hijackers is that questions by the sources about the hijackers will immediately raise red flags.